

Manson's Eye-Worm* Distributed by English Sparrows

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In this paper I wish to present some brief notes on the relation of English sparrows and the common eye-worm of chickens. These observations were made during June, 1930, in Honolulu.

Worms were first found in the eyes of domestic fowls by Dr. Manson at Amoy, China; later described by Cobbold (1879) as *Filaria mansonii*. They have since been recorded in many other parts of the world, mostly in subtropical regions. The work of Fielding** is now well known, demonstrating that the burrowing cockroach, *Pycnoscelus surinamensis* (L.) is the intermediate host of this parasitic worm.

Manson's eye-worm is a major pest of young chicks in Hawaii, particularly where they are raised on the ground in old yards. In such places, where the soil is loose and fairly dry, I have found the cockroaches down to a depth of a foot or more. The chicks are ravenous after them, and usually become thoroughly infested with the worms before they are three weeks old. I have taken as many as 205 worms from the eyes of a single chick. Recognizing these facts, successful poultry men keep their young chicks up off of the ground where they have little opportunity to feed upon the burrowing roach.

From time to time, as I have opportunity to capture young English sparrows, I examine them for parasites. I was surprised to find that they are almost invariably infested with eye-worms. In one instance, a half-grown bird was killed and dissected; the two eyes containing 152 worms; the stomach mostly fragments of insects. I was able to recognize bits of the burrowing roach together with several small worms similar to those in the eyes.

Since English sparrows are usually a nuisance, grabbing their feed from poultry yards, they probably act as an important distributor of eye-worm.

* *Oxyuris mansonii* (Cobbold).

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